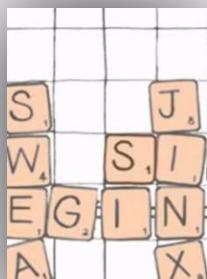




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# Death by Scrabble

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## Chapter 1 by Neolillz ❤

It's a hot day and I hate my wife.

We're playing Scrabble. That's how bad it is. I'm 42 years old, it's a blistering hot Sunday afternoon and all I can think of to do with my life is to play Scrabble.

I should be out, doing exercise, spending money, meeting people. I don't think I've spoken to anyone except my wife since Thursday morning. On Thursday morning I spoke to the milkman.

My letters are crap.

I play, appropriately, BEGIN. With the N on the little pink star. Twenty-two points.

I watch my wife's smug expression as she rearranges her letters. Clack, clack, clack. I hate her. If she wasn't around, I'd be doing something interesting right now. I'd be climbing Mount Kilimanjaro. I'd be starring in the latest Hollywood blockbuster. I'd be sailing the Vendee Globe on a 60-foot clipper called the New Horizons - I don't know, but I'd be doing something.

She plays INDEX with the I on a double letter. Sixty points. She's beating me already. Maybe I should tell her...

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I start chewing on my U. It's a bad habit, I know. All the letters are frayed. I play WARMER for 22 points, mainly so I can keep chewing on my U.

As I'm picking new letters from the bag, I find myself thinking - the letters will tell me what to do. If they spell out KILL, or STAB, or her name, or anything, I'll do it right now. I'll finish her off.

My rack spells MIHZPA. Plus the U in my mouth. Damn.

The heat of the sun is pushing at me through the window. I can hear buzzing insects outside. I hope they're not bees. My cousin Harold swallowed a bee when he was nine, his throat swelled up and he died. I hope that if they are bees, they fly into my wife's throat. mspytrack

She plays SWEATIER, using all her letters. 24 points plus a 50 point bonus. If it wasn't too hot to move I would strangle her right now.

I am getting sweatier. It needs to rain, to clear the air. As soon as that thought crosses my mind, I find a good word. HUMID on a double-word score, using the D of JINXED. The U makes a little splash of saliva when I put it down. Another 22 points. I hope she has lousy letters.

She tells me she has lousy letters. For some reason, I hate her more.

She plays FAN, with the F on a double-letter, and gets up to fill the kettle and turn on the air conditioning.

It's the hottest day for ten years and my wife is turning on the kettle. This is why I hate my wife. I play ZAPS, with the Z doubled, and she gets a static shock off the air conditioning unit. I find this remarkably satisfying.

She sits back down with a heavy sigh and starts fiddling with her letters again. Clack clack. Clack clack. I feel a terrible rage build up inside me. Some inner poison slowly spreading through my limbs, and when it gets to my fingertips I am going to jump out of my chair, spilling the Scrabble

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She plays READY on a double-word for 18 points, then goes to pour herself a cup of tea. No I do not want one.

I steal a blank tile from the letter bag when she's not looking, and throw back a V from my rack. She gives me a suspicious look. She sits back down with her cup of tea, making a cup-ring on the table, as I play an 8-letter word: CHEATING, using the A of READY. 64 points, including the 50-point bonus, which means I'm beating her now.

She asks me if I cheated.

I really, really hate her.

She plays IGNORE on the triple-word for 21 points. The score is 153 to her, 155 to me.

The steam rising from her cup of tea makes me feel hotter. I try to make murderous words with the letters on my rack, but the best I can do is SLEEP.

My wife sleeps all the time. She slept through an argument our next-door neighbours had that resulted in a broken door, a smashed TV and a Teletubby Lala doll with all the stuffing coming out. And then she bitched at me for being moody the next day from lack of sleep.

If only there was some way for me to get rid of her.

I spot a chance to use all my letters. EXPLODES, using the X of JINXED. 72 points. That'll show her.

As I put the last letter down, there is a deafening bang and the air conditioning unit fails.

My heart is racing, but not from the shock of the bang. I don't believe it - but it can't be a coincidence. The letters made it happen. I played the word EXPLODES, and it happened - the air conditioning unit exploded. And before, I played the word CHEATING when I cheated. And ZAP when my wife got the electric shock. The words are coming true. The letters are choosing their

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I have to test this.

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I have to play something and see if it happens. Something unlikely, to prove that the letters are making it happen. My rack is ABQYFWE. That doesn't leave me with a lot of options. I start frantically chewing on the B.

< 4 >

I play FLY, using the L of EXPLODES. I sit back in my chair and close my eyes, waiting for the sensation of rising up from my chair. Waiting to fly.

Stupid. I open my eyes, and there's a fly. An insect, buzzing around above the Scrabble board, surfing the thermals from the tepid cup of tea. That proves nothing. The fly could have been there anyway.

I need to play something unambiguous. Something that cannot be misinterpreted. Something absolute and final. Something terminal. Something murderous.

My wife plays CAUTION, using a blank tile for the N. 18 points.

My rack is AQWEUK, plus the B in my mouth. I am awed by the power of the letters, and frustrated that I cannot wield it. Maybe I should cheat again, and pick out the letters I need to spell SLASH or SLAY.

Then it hits me. The perfect word. A powerful, dangerous, terrible word.

I play QUAKE for 19 points.

I wonder if the strength of the quake will be proportionate to how many points it scored. I can feel the trembling energy of potential in my veins. I am commanding fate. I am manipulating destiny.

My wife plays DEATH for 34 points, just as the room starts to shake.

I gasp with surprise and vindication - and the B that I was chewing on gets lodged in my throat. I

I have to play something

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I fall to the floor. My wife

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"And that," Damien concludes, leaning back in his chair, "is how I landed in hell."

"Shut the fuck up, Damien."

He crosses his arm and glares at me. "What, you gonna prove me wrong?"

"There's no way you died due to a haunted Scrabble board. You're just mad you didn't make it up to heaven."

"One tiny sin," he yells, "One tiny sin, and I land down here with you lot! I didn't even kill my wife, I just thought about it!"

I sigh. These sinners really like to kid themselves, but none are as fervent as Damien. He has a new story about his supposed misdeeds every day of the week, enthraling newcomers and pissing up the higher ups. The last thing we need down here is something else to excite our prisoners.

That's why I'm here. To quiet him, permanently.

I've been observing Damien for the last week, searching for the perfect plan to do him in. And now, I think I have it.

"Say, Damien," I say, "how would you like to play a game of Scrabble?"

**Chapter 3 by Wolfato the Bunacado (Wolves4Days) - Inactive**



THE END.

## OR IS IT?

**Chapter 4 by robin hood**



I play STOP, and he gets up.

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I play STAB for fun, using

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I look up Damien's best words in the dictionary, and I play STAB using the ACT

STAB. I have very good ACT today.

Damien suddenly falls to the floor as people gather round him. I'm just sitting quietly in the corner. But, as he coughs up blood on the ground, he points at me with a shaky finger and gurgles three words:

"He killed me." And I know my game is up.

### Chapter 5 by KlausBaudelaire



I never knew that hell had security guards.

Two burly demons caught hold of my arms and pulled my away as Damien spat blood all over the ground, surrounded by people morphing their expressions into ones of concern. As if that bunch of murderers, rapists and fish-eaters gave a damn.

I tried resisting, but to no avail. Turns out demons are strong.

"Where are you taking me?" I asked one of my captors. He didn't answer. "What, do I need a Ouija board to get one of you guys to talk? Where am I going?"

This time he deigned to answer. "To Him."

Crap.

"You're taking me to see God? Why?"

"He will decide your fate."

I never wanted to meet God. Once I woke up in hell I knew that He was probably real, but that didn't mean I wanted to be buddies. A being who was omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, omni-everything was... terrifying. At least with a Devil, you know where he stands: on whichever side brings the most death. God would just try to do the right thing, and the right thing means something different to everyone.

They stopped abruptly, allowing me to regain my bearings. By then my head could turn around enough to see them in profile, a small message and a pathway opening from inside their heads.

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The demons turned me around and regained their hold of my arms. I could now see that I was facing a giant staircase.

"Are you kidding me? The way to get from heaven to hell is a set of stairs?"

The quiet demon mumbled, "It used to be an escalator, but it broke down."

And so, with those inspirational words, the journey began. One stair after another. After another. I tried lightening the mood with a joke.

"Jesus, this is hell!"

Neither of them cracked a smile. I decided that I'd be better off being quiet from then on.

It didn't take long to get from hell to heaven, only about ten stories' worth of stairs. Heaven and hell are closer than you'd expect. I was trying to find some deep meaning in that when the demons suddenly dropped me and started walking down the staircase. What nice guys.

I turned and was greeted by a giant pair of sandals. I looked up, but His face was obscured by a cloud.

"Hello, my child." A voice boomed around me. I figured I should probably answer.

"Uh, hi God! I'm a big fan of yours."

"I'm omniscient. Do you really think you can lie to me?"

Just like that, my bravado crumbled away. I was before God. The God. Him. He. There was no reason not to be my true self, because he knew me as well as I did.

"No, I don't. It's just that... I never really wanted you to be real!"

"It's okay, it's not the first time I've heard that. Sometimes I don't want me to be real either. It's a

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A giant pair of hands descended towards me. And they were holding the largest Scrabble board I'd ever seen. On it I saw things like, "BIGBANG", "REVOLUTION", "WORLDWARTWO", "LOVE", "THATDOGDIES".

God controlled the universe using a Scrabble board.

The booming voice posed a question.

"Do you want to play?"

## Chapter 6 by robin hood



"Aha maybe not, if that's fine with you?" I started edging towards the door.

"Hey. You know that's not fair. You have to play."

"Okay then, but only one game."

"Of course. If you win, I'll let you go, but if you lose, you will be cast into the void. Do you agree with these terms?"

"What happens if I don't?"

"You'll be cast into the void."

"Okay sure I agree."

I sit down at a table which handily appears next to me. A set of scrabble pieces appear in front of me. I look at the letters:

A F G X E M M

This is going to be interesting.

[Chapter 7 by robin hood](#)

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A drop of blood falls onto my

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I crane my head up. Above me, a giant face. It's a face I've seen countless times before. I choke on a sob.

"Well? Make your move."

God is staring me down. Can he not see Damien?

"Bu--"

A clammy dead hand comes over my mouth. His other hand takes hold of my right hand and guides it to a letter, guides the letter onto the board. E. Then another letter. Then another. Then another.

M.

M.

A.

A woman appears on the giant scrabble board. She approaches Damien. They hug each other.

"I hate you, so much."

"I hate you too honey."

The woman, Emma, releases him and he drops to the ground, released.

A million unique screams are filling the air.

I turn back to the board. Using the E in EMMA, God has played his word.

END.

Everything is slowly fading to black. Everything.

Emma pushes me out of my chair and takes my place at the board. She locks eyes with God. I curl up on the ground and sob.

## Chapter 8 by Windlion



Emma looks down at me, and shakes her head sorrowfully. "You kind of botched that one up," she murmurs.

She picks N. I. Q.

She plays AGAIN, off the A in EMMA.

The darkness around us spins, and I find myself sitting at a bar in hell that serves only lukewarm chamomile tea, listening to Damien explain how a magic Scrabble board got him dumped into

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